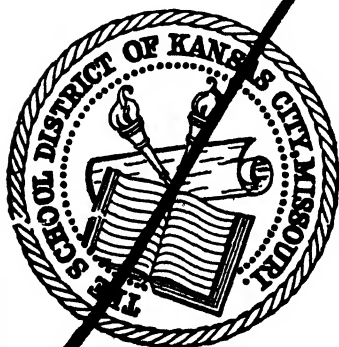


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JOHN

THE BEST POEMS OF 1929.



The
BEST POEMS
of 1929



Selected by
THOMAS MOULT
and decorated by
JOHN AUSTEN

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To
THE MEMORY
of
CHARLOTTE MEW
and
ELINOR WYLIE
Poets

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(An asterisk denotes America)

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INTRODUCTION

TWO features of *The Best Poems of 1929* demand especial notice. One is the uncommonly large number of longer poems by English authors as well as American. This indicates a widening tendency on the part of editors to print worthy poetry regardless of the space it may occupy. That writers and readers will rejoice over this additional manifestation of editorial interest in poetry may be taken for granted.

The other feature relates to a poem by the late Elinor Wylie. In printing "Portrait" after her lamented death the editor of the journal in which it appeared emphasises that it is reproduced from an issue of several years earlier, for reasons implied in his suggestion that "*Self-Portrait*" would be a more representative title than "Portrait."

These yearly harvestings of what the compiler believes to be the best poems printed in the periodicals of Great Britain, Ireland, and the U.S.A., during a specified period—in the present instance between July, 1928, and June, 1929—would not be possible without the co-operation of the various poets represented, their editors, and the poetry-loving public. That this co-operation should have been wholeheartedly given eight years ago, when the first volume of the series was issued, and maintained ever since, is the compiler's pride. It is also a reason for his continuance of a labour which might otherwise be arduous and therefore unjustifiable. True poetry comes to being only when the poet is zestful. His

work would have an unworthy sequel if those who received it were less enthusiastic than he was in the giving.

* * *

To each of those whose contributions to the year's periodicals have been reprinted, and to the editors of the various journals in which they first appeared, the compiler has conveyed his thanks in the issue that contained the reprint. Once again the opportunity has come for him to undertake that very pleasant duty, and he now wishes to add his thanks to their audience, who are a constant and increasing section of readers. A tardy thanks, may be: but it has taken time to establish that a definite number of people are anxious to study experiments in poetry and follow its progress, be the individual practitioners known or unknown. The ready help given at the British Museum reading-room is gladly acknowledged: and also that of several publishers in England and America who have issued or are about to issue volumes in which appear certain of the pieces here reproduced.

THOMAS MOULT

VACHEL LINDSAY

THE VIRGINIANS ARE COMING AGAIN

BABBITT, your tribe is passing away.
This is the end of your infamous day.
The Virginians are coming again.

With your neat little safety-vault boxes,
With your faces like geese and foxes,
You,
Short-legged, short-armed, short-minded men,
Your short-sighted days are over,
Your habits of strutting through clover,
Your movie-thugs, killing off souls and dreams,
Your magazines, drying up healing streams,
Your newspapers, blasting truth and splendor,
Your shysters, ruining progress and glory,—
Babbitt, your story is passing away.
The Virginians are coming again.

All set for the victory, calling the raid,
I see them, the next generation,
Gentlemen, hard-riding, long-legged men,
With horse-whip, dog-whip, gauntlet and braid,
Mutineers, musketeers,
In command,
Unafraid:
Great grandsons of Tidewater, and the bark-
cabins,
Bards of the Blue Ridge, in buckskin and
boots,
Up from the proudest war-path we have known—
The Virginians are coming again.

The sons of ward-heelers
Threw out the ward-heelers,
The sons of bartenders
Threw out the bartenders,
And made our streets trick-boxes all in a day,
Kicked out the old pests in a virtuous way.
The new tribe sold kerosene, gasoline, paraffine.
Babbitt sold Judas, Babbitt sold Christ.
Babbitt sold everything under the sun.
The Moon-Proud consider a trader a hog,
The Moon-Proud are coming again.

Bartenders were gnomes,
Pitiful tyrants, hairy baboons,
But you are no better with saxophone tunes,
Phonograph tunes, radio tunes,
Water-power tunes, gasoline tunes, dynamo
tunes,
And pitiful souls like your pitiful tunes,
And crawling old insolence blocking the road;
So Babbitt, your racket is passing away.
Your sons will be changelings, and burn down
your world.
Fire-eaters, troubadours, conquistadors!
Your sons will be born, refusing your load,
Thin-skinned scholars, hard-riding men,
Poets unharnessed, the moon their abode,
With the stateman's code, the gentlemen's
code,
With Jefferson's code, Washington's code,
With Powhatan's code!
From your own loins, for your fearful defeat
The Virginians are coming again.

Our first Virginians were peasants' children
But the power of Powhatan reddened their blood,
Up from the sod came splendor and flood.
Eating the maize made them more than men,
Potomac fountains made gods of men.

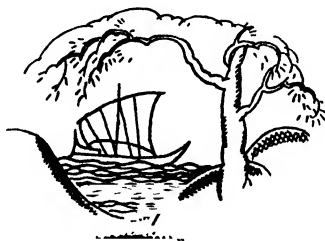
In your tottering age, not so long from you now,
The terror will blast, the armies will whirl,
Cavalier boy beside Cavalier girl,
In the glory of pride, not the pride of the rich,
In the glory of statesmanship, not of the ditch,
In the old grand manner, lost no longer:
Exquisite art born with heart-bleeding song
Will make you die horribly, raving at wrong.
You will not know your sons who are true to this soil;
For Babbitt could never count much beyond ten,
For Babbitt could never quite comprehend men.
You will die in your shame, understanding not day,
Out of your loins, to your utmost confusion
The Virginians are coming again.

Do you think boys and girls that I pass on the
street,
More strong than their fathers, more fair than their
fathers,
More clean than their fathers, more wild than their
fathers,
More in love than their fathers, deep in thought
not their fathers',
Are meat for your schemes diabolically neat?
Do you think that all youth is but grist to your
mill
And what you dare plan for them, boys will fulfill?

The next generation is free. You are gone.
Out of your loins, to your utmost confusion
The Virginians are coming again.

Put in rhetoric, whisper and hint,
Put in shadow, murmur and glint;
Jingle and jangle this song like a spur.
Sweep over each tottering bridge with a whirr,
Clearer and faster up Main Street and pike,
Till sparks flare up from the flints that strike.
Leap metrical ditches with bridle let loose.
This song is a war, with an iron-shod use.
Let no musician, with blotter and pad
Set down his pot-hooks to make a song sad.
Find

Your own rhymes
When Robert E. Lee
Gallops once more to the plain from the sea.
Give the rebel yell every river they gain.
Hear Lee's light cavalry rhyme with rain.
In the star-proud, natural fury of men
The Virginians are coming again.



WILLIAM H. DAVIES

FOR SALE

FOUR hundred years this little house has stood
Through wind and fire, through earthquake and
through flood;

Still its old beams, though bulged and warped, are
strong,

In spite of gaping wounds both deep and long.
The doors are low and give such narrow space
We must walk humbly in this little place.

The windows here, no longer square or straight,
Are able now, from their fantastic state,
To squint down their own walls, and see the
flowers

That get more drippings from the eaves than
showers.

Six hundred pounds for all this precious stone!
These little, quaint old windows squinting down;
This orchard, with its apples' last appeal
To dumpling or sweet cider; this deep well,
Whose little eye has sparkled from its birth—
Four hundred years in sixty feet of earth!



EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

DIRGE WITHOUT MUSIC

I AM not resigned to the shutting away of loving
hearts in the hard ground.

So it is, and so it will be, for so it has been time
out of mind:

Into the darkness they go, the wise and the lovely;
crowned

With lilies and with laurel they go; but I am not
resigned.

Lovers and thinkers, into the earth with you.

Be one with the dull, the indiscriminate dust.

A fragment of what you felt, of what you knew,

A formula, a phrase remains—but the best is lost.

The answers quick and keen, the honest look, the
laughter, the love,

They are gone; they are gone to feed the roses.
Elegant and curled

Is the blossom; fragrant is the blossom. I know.
But I do not approve.

More precious was the light in your eyes than all
the roses of the world.

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave

Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;

Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the
brave.

I know. But I do not approve. And I am not
resigned.

PHYLLIS MEGROZ

ALL SUMMER IN A DAY

ALL summer in a day—
This will I give to thee,
In those short hours
Thou shalt have all the flowers
Of June and May:
Bud, leaf, and blossom,
They shall unfolded be
To deck thy bosom,
And where thou shalt incline
Thy sun-wreathed hair
There shall float crystalline
Along the air
Translucent butterflies whose trembling wings
Grow swift and sure to wheel their little way.
All summer in a day—
Open thy door that's winter-locked, sweet heart,
Guard not thy store
But be thou prodigal of what thou art,
And let thy beauty flow
Into the glow,
Life's starry circle narrowed to a ray—
What matters after
Time's antique laughter?
Thou shalt have had all summer in a day.



DOROTHY WELLESLEY

LENIN

(February 1927)

IT was night when I saw Lenin,
The Red Square dark but for snow.
Kremlin walls invisible, only the tower
Merged to light at the top. There light flung
upward
From a lantern unseen, threw its glow
On a flag which flew on the sky,
As colours turn in the dark:
A curious unnatural scarlet.

I went through the door to Lenin.
Each side of the door
Were stationed, like figures from Noah's Ark,
Two sentries, their skirts bowling out
To a mass of solidity round their feet for the cold:
Wooden toys set firm on the base;
And I smiled as I passed through the door.

So I came down the steps to Lenin;
With a herd of peasants before
And behind me, I saw
A room stained scarlet, and there
A small wax man in a small glass case;
Two sentries again at his feet, and one at his head,
His little hands folded upon his breast:
Pious spinster asleep; and I said:
"Much writing these delicate hands have done."
A lamp shone red.
An aureole over him, on his red hair,
His uniform clothed him still.

Greedy of detail I saw
In these two minutes allowed,
The man was not wax, as they said,
But a corpse, for a thumb nail was black:
The thing was Lenin.

Then a woman beside me cried
With a strange voice, foreign, loud.
And I, who fear not life nor death, and those who
 have died
Only a little, was inwardly shaken with fear,
For I stood in the presence of God:
The voice I heard was the voice of all gener-
 ations
Acclaiming new faiths, horrible, beautiful faiths;
I knew that the woman wailed as women wailed
 long ago
For Christ in the sepulchre laid.
Christ was a wax man too, when they carried Him
 down to the grave.

Christ came not to save,
Christ was terrible too,
He brought not peace but a sword.

Then I knew that I too should wail with the
 peasant women,
Not for Lenin, not for our Lord,
But wail in my heart for the fireside personal
 gods;
For Apollo who leaned on the lintels of farms,
 in the evening light,
Begging a flagon of wine. Oh for her:

Aphrodite Anadyomene,
White in her shell.

Where goes man? This I know:
It was night when I saw Lenin,
The Red Square dark but for snow.



KATHRYN WHITE RYAN

CLIFF DWELLERS, NEW MEXICO

CLIMBERS of cliffs are an enchanted race,
They trust, they trespass, and they leave no
trace.

They give back to the earth each thing they took,
They give all back, manos and shepherd's crook.

Ladders that knew the upstretched reaching hand
And idols are together under sand,
Arrow and bowl and blanket on the loom
Have disappeared from every hallowed room.

Time smoothes the cliffs in secrecy of how
Such trust in them earth chose to disavow,
These tiered, sun-healed incisions on a ledge
Give silent proof earth gives no one a pledge.

HENRY BELLAMAN

PREMONITIONS

I

I SEE your silver image glow
Upon the loom; I count the breath
Tossed to and fro by life and death;
I watch the increasing pattern grow.

I can accept a plan of doom;
(The years compound propitiate pain—
The years decline like passing rain.)
But—Who the weaver? What the loom?

II

Now have we seen that signal from the hills—
A gilded hieroglyph upon the air—
A falling flutter of a broken wing
That gropes and staggers in a dizzy ring,
Something beset with more than mortal ills,
Something abandoned to a desperate care.

A single leaf, as yellow as the moon—
So has Death set a single golden sail,
The first envoy of all that later fleet
Intent and certain of our keen defeat.
(A wind has stirred along the hills' high noon—
And all the trees are shivering and pale.)

If there were reason to discover now
A new simplicity in older ways,
I could proclaim historical lament

And cry the hope of some quite sure content
In such hypocrisies as sweetly bow
To blind destroyers of these perfect days.

I praise the candor of this sombre fate,
Its high design and reckless love of law—
Ourselves the mates of stars in lofty stress
The equal sharers of divine duress—
Perhaps its rudeness and our scornful hate
Together may anneal the seeming flaw.

III

Look now on either side the edge
Of snow that cuts the world in two:
This is the reach of the great wedge
Of mountain shouldering the blue.

Here are the last waves of the storm
Fixed sharp, and frozen in the bland
Immensity, as tides leave form
Of their retreat upon the sand.

Prepare now for the clear surprise
Of avalanche along your track,
One shout of your exultant rise
Will loose the mountain at your back.

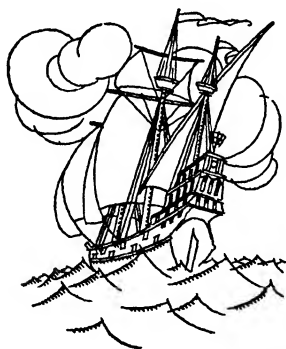
See! Half a shining world drops sheer—
White-feather, wild, upon the way
We came—is gone; nor can we hear
One echo break this perfect day.

IV

I rise from fear as one might rise from death
With certain knowledge of an empty place,
Assured that when the ebb of failing breath
Is done, I shall not wake, nor shall I dream.

There is tranquility in this, the grace
Of a quite solitary heritage . . .
And so departing, leave no single trace
Of guiding light, or dark misguiding fate.

Nor is there left a cause for noble rage,
Seeing that things are simply what they seem;
There is no caged, no keeper, and no cage—
Only a music silenced soon or late.



SYLVIA LYND

VIRGIN GOLD

FAIR-HAIRED barley, the summer's child,
Grew that year in the corner field—
I never walked there without going
Slowly to see the barley growing.

It had a voice more soft than the wave,
It had a gleam that waters have—
As bright as glass I saw it glisten,
I heard it whisper and stood to listen.

Three long hills, three miles away,
Blue as a blue cornflower were they—
The barley, moving like a sea,
Laid its pale locks against my knee.

Thinking of this, again I stand,
And feel its coolness touch my hand—
The pale, cool barley, that is ever
Beautiful as a flowing river.

Lovely its stir in summer's breath;
Lovely the knife they reap it with—
Like the small moon of summer eves
The sickle that cuts the barley sheaves!

And like a lover's every tress
Gathered within the mute caress
Of the warm leaning stooks—where fold
The pretty locks of virgin gold.

EMANUEL CARNEVALI

NIGHT

NIGHT, ascending
from the weary earth
to the sky that swallows you
like an enormous bird gulping its food,

Night, I burn
like a piece of paper
within your heart.

Oppressed, weighed down by your pall,
the town sleeps.

Your hybrid shadows,
where no coolness can be found,
cut the town in slices.

That simple word *tonight*
is a sweet promise,
an oath of faith,
an irrevocable guaranty.

You hide something in your bosom,
your body is wrapped
in falsely chaste shadows,
I do not desire you.

Greater than the sea,
lovelier than the day,
loftier than God,
more indomitable than sea-foam,

Santa Claus of dreams,
married to the black wind,
yet you bring me no rest,
no peace,
no sleep,
no shelter.

But I want to be your *enfant terrible*,
tell your secrets to a bunch of fools,
deceive you, betray you,
proclaim that your blackness and your chastity
are both gullible stories.

Proclaim that you are hiding your face
because it is unbeautiful!

Proclaim that you are no relation of God,
and that who says so is a poetic liar.

Proclaim that you give shelter and sleep
only to those that desecrate,
by their ways of living,
the day.

Lover of a thousand poets, you
shall not have me.
If they bring you fresh new love, like fruits,
I have an ancient quarrel with you.



MARGARET MARSHALL

THE FARMER'S WIFE

THE sun is gilding all the barley tips,
And I lie dreaming underneath the trees,
While, like a silver stream, the evening slips
And lengthens with the shadows on the leas . . .
In my primrose linen dress
I walk again through sunny lanes,
With eyes alight in happiness
Beside the laden harvest wains.
The horses in our fields are white,
And there are glossy mares at graze,
Whose rollicking, unsteady foals
Play through the drowsy summer days.
I stand with arms frothed elbow-deep
In bowls of yellow cream,
And singing, make my butter there,
Devonshire way—nor know I dream—
My hair is honey-coloured,
And my eyes are young and light;
The days are made for laughing,
And there's love and rest at night.
My man is strong and tawny,
Like a stallion in his pride,
Brown is he, and modelled finely,
Moving with a tall man's stride, . . .
Sinks now below the hill the sun's red rim,
And sinks my dream into the present pain;
I am a slattern, with my eyes grown dim
With straining to see Devon fields again:
My man is like a ferret where he stands;
I am afraid—afraid of his thin hands.

MARY BRENT WHITESIDE

FROM A TOMB OF THE KINGS

NOT all the treasures, once this boy's,—
The throne encrusted with turquoise,
With lapis and carnelian;
The golden beds, the peacock chair;
The caskets and the royal fan,
Though Egypt's skill was lavished there,
By many a cunning artisan,
Could make him seem a human thing—
This mummy that was once a king.

More moving than the glory planned,
Remains the message of a hand
That laid a flower on his brow.
Though cerements bind each withered limb,
A ghostly lotus tells us how
A little queen once grieved for him.
So, while his flesh is parchment now,
We know this one who died long since,
Was lover once, as well as prince.



IRENE HAUGH

THE VALLEY OF THE BELLS

Suggested by the music of "La Vallée des Cloches" (Ravel)

MONOTONOUS ringing, far away, a solitary
bell.

Where? For whom? By whom? There's nobody
here to tell.

Noon, silent summer noon. The flowers
Droop in the heat. Cloudless, blue, blue sky.
Haze on the convent spire. White, heat haze.
Not a stir on the leaves, not a fluttering butterfly.

Heavy, breathless noon. Even the cows
Sleepy-eyed, cease their tinkling tune
And drowse in the shade of the trees.
All things drowse in the lonely Siesta noon.

Twelve! Listen. Awake, awake peals
The angelus bell. No stir, no answer here.
Pray, pray, an echo rings from the church
Far below. They're pealing and ringing far and
near.

Awake, awake. Have you heard, oh idle one?
Why do you dream, lying all day, supine?
Up, up and pray. With your lips to the earth,
Oh, beware, beware you're drinking the Lotus
wine.

Bells, bells, I hear you long ago,
In a far away home, hushing the shrill street cries
In the fetid, smoky air of a northern town;
Pealing and mingling with all its labouring noise.

I'm still in the valley here. They've ceased. But
no.

The little convent bell! 'tis late, 'tis late.
Hurry, sister, hurry; the hour is past.
Ring out, little bell. The noon will never wait.

Silence again. Drowsy summer day.
No stir, no answer here. The sun will creep
Soon enough to the western sky. And the bees,
hush!
They hum and drone. "Sleep, stranger, sleep."

And still monotonous, far away, a solitary bell.
Why is it ringing now? There's nobody here to
tell.



ALFRED NOYES

BIRD SONG

TELL me, you
That sing in the blackthorn,
Out of what Mind
Your melody springs.
Is it the World-Soul
Throbs like a fountain
Up through the throat
Of an elf with wings?

Five sweet notes
In a golden order,
Out of that deep realm
Quivering through,
Flashed like a phrase
Of light through darkness.
But *Who* entangled them?
Tell me, *Who*?

You whose throats
In the rain-drenched orchard
Peal your joys
In a cadenced throng;
You whose wild notes,
Fettered by Beauty,
Move like the stars
In a rounded song;

Yours is the breath
But *Whose* is the measure,
Shaped in an ecstasy
Past all art?

Yours is the spending:
Whose is the treasure?
Yours is the blood-beat:
Whose is the heart?

Minstrels all
That have woven your housen
Of withies and twigs
With a Mind in-wrought,
Ye are the shuttles,
But out of what Darkness
Gather these thoughtless
Patterns of thought?

Bright eyes glance
Through your elfin doorways,
Roofed with rushes,
And lined with moss.
Whose are the voiceless
Pangs of creation?
Yours is the wild bough:
Whose is the Cross?

Carols of light
From a lovelier kingdom,
Gleams of a music
On earth unheard,
Scattered like dew
By the careless wayside,
Pour through the lifted
Throat of a bird.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK

THE QUEST

I, WHO made of love a rope
To hang me by,
Can find in all this world no place
Wherein to die.

And I, who long have made of Time
A tumbril cart,
Cannot, however great my strength,
Make the wheels start.

Where is the tree grown tall enough?
Where is the hour?
Till then no pity in a leaf,
No music in a tower.



LADY MARGARET SACKVILLE

A SONG OF CITIES

I HAVE dreamed of great cities and the world as
it was;

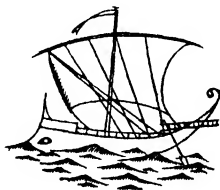
High walls tumbled in Italy and France;
White buried cities deep in jungle grass;
And empty cities where the fireflies dance.

And what of those towns which lie buried under
sea,

Which chime their bells and chime again yet no
man comes?

Tall towers of China built of porphyry,
And those Red Gates which were Byzantium's?

Tarnished they lie—a heap of old brocade,
Or foundered like a galleon with all her sails.
Brave, lost cities which made the world afraid!—
Some day I'll write them all in a book of tales.



CHARLES BALLARD

ROLLIN AND ME

YESTERDAY Rollin found me on the hillside
gathering berries and he helped me.
He gave me one, and laughed at the red stain on
my lips, and kissed me.
Then all at once he knew what I had known for a
long time, and told me;
But I couldn't speak just then.

So we went hand-in-hand down through the long
field, walking in the daisies,
Till we came to the grassy bank of the river,
There I answered him.

Rollin is good and honest, and a willing worker.
Soon he'll have money laid by.
Then we'll marry, and have a little house by the
river.

I'll be a wife, and keep fowls, and save money for
a cow.
Children will come.

At last we'll grow old and die;
And our children will lay us close to the church,
side by side;
And we'll go to our Father in heaven.

That's all about Rollin and me.

GRETCHEN WARREN

LOST

HIGH out of time they fly,
Beauties the poets lost—
Their dreams that soared too high.

Lonely and strange and clear,
Shakespeare's uncaptured bird
Sings the note he died to hear.

Too fierce for Greece or Rome,
Up, up their visions sped
To this immenser home.

Here, though Keats ceased to be,
And prisoned lies in dust,
His nightingale goes free.

* * *

Call, anguished poet, call
To these wanderers in the vast . . .
Does a broken echo fall?



STANLEY J. KUNITZ

MAN DOES NOT ASK FOR MUCH

BEHOLD this darkling world: it is a cave
Of bitter circumstance and swift decay,
Wherein the blind soul, stumbling to the grave,
Knows nothing but the peril of the way.
Man does not ask for much, being content
With scanty joy in plenitude of grief;
A mouth to kiss, money to pay his rent,
One small coincidence to speed belief
In a divine Redeemer, sweetly kind,
Who if He maketh man diseased and wild,
Corruptible and ignorant and blind,
Yet loveth He His poor afflicted child.
Then is man happy going to his doom:
Then will he lie down singing in his tomb.



CARL SANDBURG

LAVENDER LILIES

THE lavender lilies in Garfield Park lay lazy in the morning sun.

A cool summer wind flicked at our eyebrows and the pansies fixed their yellow drops and circles for a day's show.

The statue of Lincoln, an axe on his shoulder, a bronze axe, was a chum of five bluejays crazy and calling, "Another lovely morning, another lovely morning."

And a headline of my newspaper said, "Thirty dead in race riots."

And Lincoln with the axe, and all the lavender lilies and the cool summer wind and the pansies, the living lips of bronze and leaves, the living lips of bluejays, all they could say was, "Another lovely morning, another lovely morning."

GEORGE RYLANDS

HARVEST

THE pasture gleams a vivid green below the
sullen cloud;
Across the hill the shadow steals and bares the
stubble to the sun.
Blow scud, pile tempest! the corn is carried, the
ricks are thatched, the summer is done!
O heart, where is your harvest? I had reaped, had
I sowed, had I ploughed.

Rehearse no Shepherd's Calendar—that August
comes again,
That farmland must lie fallow and the blood leap
up with the sap of spring.
Is there frost on the air? The lips' sweet is withered;
Time turns on a wheel but beauty takes
wing.
I have not seen, I shall not, my acres white with
grain.



E. MERRILL ROOT

THE COW

THAT four-legged fountain called a cow
Is stranger than the Sphinx:
What Oedipus has told us how
Green grass within a copper cow
Turns the white milk he drinks?

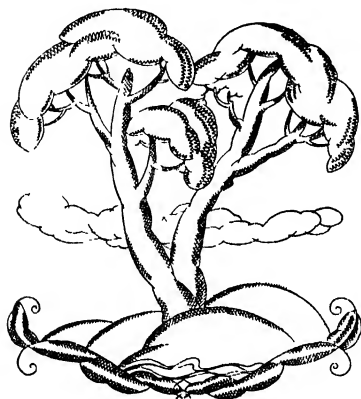
The Roc from the Arabian Tale
Was not so strange as she;
Jonah's apartment in the whale
Beside her alchemy's a pale
And gentle verity.

God's jolly cafeteria
With four legs and a tail.
As mystic as Cabala,
An elf in rufous taffata,
She pours us ivory ale.

The Tavern of the Crumpled Horn,
She pours a cosmic flood
That antedates John Barleycorn;
'Twill feed the Superman unborn:
It nourished Adam's blood.

She eats the grass and honeydew,
The buttercups and daisies;
And she will dream, and chew, and chew—
Invite her soul, and loaf, and moo
Life's rude and wholesome praises.

Her udder is a Holy Grail
Whence heroes, saints, and lovers—
Yes, all the Sons of Man—grow hale.
Oh, she's an ambulant Fairytale
That's bound in leathern covers.



R. N. D. WILSON

DONEGAL COAST

I KNOW that at the end,
Obedient to the sea,
I shall come
to this last utter coast,
blinded with light.

All colour gone,
but the swift spate of silver,
the grey mountain-shoulder
wave-commanding,
and my hope in its fastness!

Divided, forsaken,
What should I cling to?
Thought, memory,
the nets of religion
break like a shoal in the sundering tide-streams.

Here, then, I stand
as night before morning,
the sea at dawn
and the long waves breaking:
O bright Homeric waters
I pray you receive me!

Not as a stranger,
not as an outcast,
I come as thy pilgrim,
I call thee to claim me
by the sands on my feet—
by the salt in my heart!

A. E.

GERMINAL

CALL not thy wanderer home as yet,
Though it be late;
Now is his first assailing of the invisible gate.
Be still through that light knocking. The hour
Is thronged with fate.

To that first tapping at the invisible door
Fate answereth.
What shining image or voice, what sigh
Or honied breath,
Comes forth, shall be the master of life
Even to death.

Satyrs may follow after. Seraphs
On crystal wing
May flame. But the delicate first comer
It shall be King,
They shall obey, even the mightiest,
That gentle thing.

All the strong powers of Dante were bowed
To a child's mild eyes,
That wrought within him that travail
From depths up to skies,
Inferno, Purgatorio
And Paradise.

Amid the soul's grave councillors
A petulant boy

Laughs under the laurels and purples, the elf
Who snatched at his joy,
Ordering Cæsar's legions to bring him
The world for his toy.

In ancient shadows and twilights,
Where childhood had strayed,
The world's great sorrows were born
And its heroes were made.
In the lost boyhood of Judas
Christ was betrayed.

Let thy young wanderer dream on:
Call him not home.
A door opens, a breath, a voice,
From the ancient room
Speaks to him now. Be it dark or bright
He is knit with his doom.



BABETTE DEUTSCH

THE ENGLISH SINGERS

THEY sang: and the wide hall was charged with
slow
Immoderate gold, as though their voices were
fingers
On the sluice that is west of Eden. Halt that flow,
Yet riding the air like a feather, the radiance lingers.

They sang again: a white-flanked island rose
Out of the music, upborne on the tides of their
singing;
Girdled with masts, its greens and towers and mows
Gay with the sound of sailors homeward flinging.

Their melodies were mournful, being wise
As a woman is, whose lover death hath taken,
As a man who looks on his work with aged eyes,
Oh, and sweet as the throat of a child by laughter
shaken.

"God give you good-morning, my masters, past
three o-clocke
And a fair morning," they sang, whereupon
morning
Put off her grey wimple, put on a rosy smock,
And made brisk answer to night's sour warning.

"Lanthorns and candle light, hang out mayes for
all night,"
They sang, and their voices were as lanthorns lifted
Against the coming of the unending night,
And when they ceased its shadow never shifted.

A. E. COPPARD

TO WINTER

FLAUNT not so boldly
Thy frozen crest,
Crushing so coldly
The beggar's breast;
Let the limbs trot
Warm to the farm,
And of birds not
The least take harm;
Wild winter refrain
From wounding measures,
Bring us no bane,
But only thy pleasures.

For, lo, this summer
My child was born;
So blithe a newcomer
Thou wilt not spurn?
Let the last rose
Bloom by our door,
And those icy throes
Die on the shore.
For she is my joy,
My dream and my story—
Blow tenderly, boy,
And thine be the glory.

When as thou freezest
The sun must shine,
The snow thou releasest
Fall uncondign;

Rack not, O railer,
The poor, nor foil
Ploughman and sailor
Under their toil;
Bring them no cares
T' affront my daughter,
Spoiling the airs
Sweet heaven has taught her.

My sweet little linnet,
Nought shall annoy
With the secret in it
This one year of joy;
So live like the flowers
Ere time contemn,
And sleep as One slept
In Bethlehem.
And sweet God of Thy power
These virtues bequeath her;
To find her own dower
And not marry beneath her!



ROBERT FROST

ACQUAINTED WITH THE NIGHT

I HAVE been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain and back in rain.
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and hushed the sound of feet
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;
And further still at an unearthly height
One luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.



JAMES DALY

MARINE

intricate slow shuddering lights conquer
the fog lo they are stars and there far out
see that phantasmal glimmer called a ship emerge
with the moon

bravely

O on such a night
pilgrimage ends

in quiet brief as the sea's
brief as the blood's quiet by this quiet sea



KATHARINE TYNAN

THE CATTLE

AS we sped homewards under a starry sky,
By the rich pastures, the sleeping and quiet
trees,
What are the little lights, tossed low and high
As a lantern swung in a man's hand? What are
these?

Who are these coming? A soundless multitude
Swerving away from the light? These are eyes,
eyes, eyes,
The eyes of frightened cattle, red as blood,
Pass into the night and its mysteries.

Under the holy mountains the pastures keep
Dew and honey and quiet breathing, deep rest,
By the side of the milky mother the lambs are asleep
Till the cuckoo calls; the night has a mother's
breast.

But these that have passed us by; they go, they go,
Driven with curses and goads, unpitied, un-
stayed
To the slaughter house and the blood and at last
the blow—
The ghostly cattle passing have made me afraid.

MARGERY SWETT MANSFIELD

THESE MOUNTAINS ARE NOT KIND

'ANYONE must see," I said, "anyone not blind,
These mountains are not kind.
They make a show of flowers and tender green
But rivers gnaw between
Their breasts too fiercely, and many a bone must
blanch
In the scars of every avalanche."

I spoke bitterly: I had heard
The dying hiss of a snake-stung bird,
The scream of lost cattle in the falls,
And the calls
Of hungry coyote. I had seen
Pine trees, flattened to the earth,
Spread their living green
Humbly to make a foot-mat for the storm.
"What they cannot kill," I said, "these mountains
orm."

"There is black magic here in every weed,
And he who comes to love the place
Eats bitter seed.
Knotted and bent by toil,
He plants his hope in sterile soil.
Safety and rest are not for such a one;
By flood or frost or thirsty sun
He is undone.
The pinnacles that split the skies
Are daggers in the clouds' white sides,
The sharp-edged lakes are jewels on a sorceress.
And I will speak the truth, and not sing praise."

But even while I spoke the dusk descended
On slow grey feet, and gently drew
Sharp contours into lovely ways
Of sweetest sorrow, dimmest blue,
And green and purple, softly blended.
My mountains! Where is she who had intended
To speak the truth of you!



CHARLES NORMAN

TO THE MEMORY OF WILFRED OWEN

(1893-1918)

INTO the sunset of their youth they strode,
Resolved to horror splendidly, and brave;
Oh, brave they were upon war's final road
To bring irresolution to the grave,
Firmly, in the staccato scene of war
Where the huge guns abode whose speech has
blown
To twilight beaches of the evening star
Since Flanders and the fields of France were
sown
With youth, and the sad world forgot to weep.
Oh, these were lads with singing in their blood,
And lips too fond of kissing love to sleep,
And loathing their last mistress of moist mud.

These, in the world's far cities, walked so proud,
Tingling when twilight glimmered, and their eyes
Saw glad-faced girls unto whose eyes they vowed
The fleet, immortal moments of the wise.
Oh, these were lovers and beloved of many,
The nights glowed with their ardor, days
dawned bright;
Now where they sleep, they are unknown to any;
The trailing seeds thrust through them toward
the light.
And these were song-makers and full of dreaming,
Who brooded in late hours of endeavour,
Until they saw war's lurid flowers streaming
In the shocked sky, and shut their eyes forever.

Now, in the streets they trod, the shadows lie
In deep, spilled heaps of gloom that cats disturb
Probing the midnight and the fleece of sky
That glitters in the pool beside the curb.
And not their sons walk here, but tired, old
men;
And women old for sorrow of those years
That tried their souls, and will not try again,
Having but once inured their souls to tears,
Horror and loneliness, and perished dreams.
Oh, here, before bright bugles called to death,
Lads paused for kissing the entangled gleams
Of moonlight in girls' hair; their souls drew
breath.

But not for long; for then the summons came,
The glamorous treachery of bugles blowing,
And banners beating in their hearts like flame
That were not on the roads when they were
going
In solemn march abreast to stain the ground,
And spill their years for petals' sustenance;
This was the final glory that they found,
In dark or twilight on the soil of France.
And lads fell there that will not ever know
Those seeds they brooded on had come to bud
On barren ground and ground beneath the snow
In the astounding blossom of their blood.

Their hearts, the harps of sorrow, are unwrought,
Are stilled forever, and will sound no more;
And all their visioning has come to nought;
Their ships of dreaming foundered by the shore.

Their songs and stories and their sculpturing,
Painting, and all the arts of their distress,
Blow with the wind from seas of evening,
Beyond the sea-towns of forgetfulness.
And we forget the grandeur of their ways
Before spring laboured in the earth to speed
The tragic flowers of these empty days
That bloom upon the highway of new greed.

O slender shadows of the cross that hide
The little grass upon lads' graves, but not
The folly of our elders in their pride
Whose souls are crucified on gleams of thought:
What of the living lads—oh, what of these,
Who face the sunrise of exulting times,
Aware of the bright buds of ecstasies,
Splendor of art, and love that chants in rhymes?
There is no voice that answers, but the moan
Of winds mourning in twilight, and the sound
Of those manœuvred guns again that shone
When lads before them paced to pave the
ground.



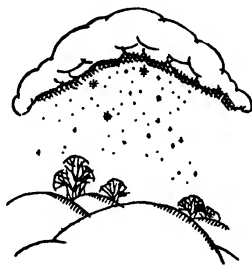
HAROLD VINAL

FLIGHT

THEY are immortal, voyagers like these,
Bound for supreme and royal latitudes;
They soar beyond the eagle, where it broods,
With Venus and the evening Pleiades;
For in the blue pale Indies of the sky,
They plough, gold-prowed, the Arteries of Air,
Finding an unexplored dimension there—
They leave us Star Maps we may voyage by.

Not Galileo, with his dreaming power,
Not great Columbus, master of the gale,
Chartered for Time, such harbours for man's
flight.

Lured by another Odyssey, a Grail,
They climbed the heavens. Byrd in his white hour,
Lindbergh, an eagle sweeping through the night.



THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL

FORT LARAMIE 1834-1924

SKYLIKE grew delphiniums
Through the planking cracks in the two-inch
floor;
This is Wyoming walking in,
I said, through an open door.

Wyoming is old as a rotting plank
That is not humus yet,
Blue flowers walk through an open door,
That grow through puncheons in the floor,
Petals blow on the trapper's hearth.
Under this floor and in the earth,
I said, is a taproot net,
And the roof is a thing the sun shines through
To make Wyoming flowers blue.

I touched the frame, there was no door,
It was a place where a door had been;
I said there was a time before
These bluest flowers came walking in
When such a quiet opening
In a strong wall in the afternoon,
With no-one here and a strong door gone,
Would have been a fearful thing.

(I said Cheyennes and Sioux left more
Than silent flowers upon a floor.)

I watched the pigeons roar and pound
And drag their tails upon the ground,

And I said these walls are thicker than
The arm's length of a prairie man,
But I said a pigeon circles through
These four white walls of stony mud
As if no smoky pane had ever
Turned the sun to pigeon's blood,
I said does anyone recall
When birds did not fly through this wall?

My hand touched the bud of a blue flower's coming
And I heard a pigeon's mating drumming;
What is Fort Laramie? I said,
There flows the Platte, here are the dead:
They lie in a fold of the greasewood ground,
A few were killed and some were drowned,
And some had reasons for knowing why
Any place was a place to die,
And I looked to see if any stone
Said *Better die here than in Oregon*,
And I looked for letters that could be pieced
Into *We died here on our way back East*.

But I found no words from the honest dead,
For the living had marked the stones instead.

Lone men grow honest when they die,
You can sometimes tell by the way they lie
Where they were going and why they stopped,
But these, I said, have all been propped
In cottonwood boxes of compromise
With coppered eyes on paradise
And backs set tight against the world,

With arms well crossed and fingers curled;
How many death-set arms were cracked
To build a sign the living lacked?
How many honest muscles sprung
To fit a hymn that must be sung?
What is a cross upon a breast
That does not face the East or West,
Here under me
At Laramie?

Fort Laramie is Nature now;
I said if there is any trace
Of how many millions passed this place
Under canvas tilts with faces drawn
On the bitter dream of Oregon,
Then any man is natural
As a prairie dog or a coral thing
Or a wind that blows a mountain down.

Bill Sublette was a coral thing,
This is your reef, too, Broken Hand;
Bob Campbell was a prairie dog,
This is your mound of earth, Bob Campbell;
Jim Bridger was a blowing wind,
This is a mountain's bone, Old Gabe;
Kit Carson, did you write a will?
This graveyard, Kit, is also Nature;
Dreamers, fighters, cowards, lovers,
Here is a plank a blossom covers,
Here is Wyoming walking in
With a blue flower and a pigeon's wing.

ROBERT NICHOLS

EPIC WIND

AN epic wind is loose to-night, ~
It seems to shift earth's very floor;
The sea is all one seething light,
The sky a roaring open door.

An opal spume obscures the bay
Where the distracted breakers crowd;
The very dunes are whirled away,
Spun moonward in a flaming cloud.

Blow, furious wind! Blow, hurricane, blow!
Burst windows, uproot scaffoldings!
Spin the spire cocks until they crow,
Clash spurs, and clap their bronzen wings!

Shake every tower and steeple staid,
Set the bells lungeing overhead
Till their mouths' clangorous cannonade
Summon old England's doughty dead

From the four quarters of the globe,
From weltering water, plain and sky,
To appear in fiery wreath and robe
About the beds where sleepless lie

All such as doubt this England's power
To be yet more than she has been,
In seeming autumn blaze with flower,
Mock promised winter with wild green.

Blow, furious wind! Ride, spirits, ride!
Ours to accept and yours to give!
Blessèd be those for England died,
Blessèd be those for her shall live!

JOHN FREEMAN

FROM "THE ENEMIES"—

EPILOGUE

THESE three, Sight, Hearing, Touch,
Have I loved overmuch,
Thinking in them alone
My spirit might find its own
Energy and delight.
But in the night
They sleep, those false allies,
Smiling enemies.
Then to see, hear, embrace
That which no semblance has
To shape and sound miscalled
Real, and unappalled
Endure an hour, a night,
Supreme, severe Delight!

But as in cold high lands
The Arab sleeps on sands
Crusted with sudden frost,
And wakes to find him host
To serpent curled beside,
Heat-loving; so, if I hide
Myself from sense the form
Abhorred slides near, that Worm
Called Death, to sun him by
My spirit's agony.
Who shall deliver me?
I pray, and shuddering hang
Watching that trembling fang,
The lidless eye,

Death's mottled livery.
Who shall deliver, who
But God who made me so?



DON GORDON

SEA

SEA is white marble waiting the stonecutter's
hand,
Splendid with power but formless and lost,
Hungry for patterns, for lined and recurrent
shapes;
Chaos crying for symmetry, envious of mountains
and birds
Whose heights and migrations follow laws, return
precisely on wings.

Ships etch wild marble, hard prows cutting clear;
Sea-veins open, patterns form and set:
Sea-loveliness seems measured and forever made,
Then blue obliteration . . . salt curves coil again.

All other tracings pass, all faint designs depart . . .
Wind-edge, sun-gold, moon fingers on the tide;
Life crude and averse to slow shadows, soft sea-
veins etched,
Primal fluid sagging with beauty embryonic,
unborn,
Sea is the last void, chaos breathless and moving
and mad.



VREST TEACHOUT ORTON

URN BURIAL

SOPHRINEY, close that bedroom door,
I plan never to see that room again;
Best to leave it . . . just as it was.
No, don't even go in there to dust . . .
I want to leave that room, fixings and all
In the places she left them. Leave the bedclothes
too,
Just where she laid them back, and the two
cushions
In the chairs.
She has gone . . .
I know she'd want it left.

That's the way she'd want it.
Even when she used to go away
Visiting for a week or two somewhere,
When she'd come back
Things out of place disturbed her, made her cry,
She wanted every thing in its own place . . .
That's the way I aim to leave it.

She might come back . . . they say such things
do happen,
Stranger things have. Well, if she does,
She'll find her things all in the drawers and closets
Just as they were . . . just as she laid 'em there.

HUMBERT WOLFE

MIDNIGHT

YOU too at midnight suddenly awaking
may wonder, if you hear a step outside,
(until your heart replies) what set it aching
and listen, knowing that your heart has lied.

London is very quiet. Faint and far
I hear all night the footsteps meet and part
from my high window, and all night they are
your footsteps softly treading down my heart.

Parting is common as death. Why should one
phrase
put out the noise of the world, a word so worn
that children lisp it, darken all our days,
and in the night blow loud as Roland's horn,

warning the armies of the spirit, lying
by their camp-fires, when the world's all still,
that love's bright outpost overwhelmed is dying
in the heathen night alone beyond the hill.

It may be waking at deep midnight you
have heard the horn and cried upon your heart,
as I who hear it now, cry all night through:
"O God! how better far was Roland's part."



KILE CROOK

MEMORIAL TO LARRY

*THE Me of then, plus circumstance,
Plus these ten years, is Me to-day.
Your vital self, plus lead and chance
And half a second, is clay—clay.*

* * * *

Ten years are gone. Let's see—I've got
A job, a house, a wife and two
Fine children. And substantial chairs,
A car—well, What would you?

My wife is good, my children well,
And all is well, I guess, with me.
So nights we take the car and ride,
Or sit at home cosily.

Thus ten years more, and ten years more,
And more or less, then I am spent.
*To all the decades, coming, gone,
You are indifferent.*

* * * *

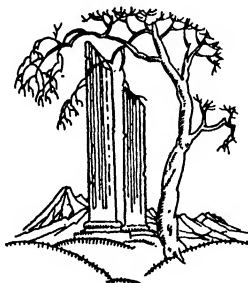
You are remembered, Larry.

You are remembered by Florence, who for love
of you would have played the pretty fool; whose
son is in the second grade at school; who heard of
your death and stared on blank days. She speaks
your praise to her bank-clerk husband.

Your mother remembers: you are her distant son;
she is the misty-eyed speaking with honest pride,

"This was my son who died in the war." You are remembered for— she is your mother. But mothers bear mortality as well as sons. Time runs . . . Your insurance money went in government bonds. In elegant bronze you are remembered. In the Public Square is a boulder. There, on the front of the boulder, is inscribed some prose (I forget how it goes) praising Our Warrior Heroes. On the boulder's back is a bronze plaque bearing some names and your name. Your buddies remember: last December we held a re-union. And someone spoke of Larry, "— Larry." "Damn nice fellow." "He was that guy in the third platoon." "No, Larry was in the second platoon." Larry, late of some platoon, this was your meed: we agreed that you were a nice fellow. Our voices grew mellow: "Damn nice fellow." There will be other re-unions.

You are remembered, Larry, till I shall some day die. But just now I cannot recall your face.



F. L. LUCAS

BELEAGUERED CITIES

BUILD your houses, build your houses, build
your towns,

Fell the woodland, to a gutter turn the brook;
Pave the meadows, pave the meadows, pave the
downs,

Plant your bricks and mortar where the grasses
shook,

The wind-swept grasses shook.

Build, build your Babels black against the sky;
But mark yon small green blade, your stones
between,

The single spy
Of that uncounted host you have outcast;
For with their tiny pennons waving green
They shall storm your streets at last.

Build your houses, build your houses, build your
slums,

Drive your drains where once the rabbits used to
lurk;

Let there be no song now save the wind that hums
Through the idle wires while dumb men tramp
to work,

Tramp to their idle work.

Silent the siege; none notes it; yet one day
Men from your walls shall watch the woods once
more

Close round their prey;

Build, build the ramparts of your giant-town,
Yet they shall crumble to the dust before
The battering thistle-down.

ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

THE EMPRESSES

VICTORIA, Carlotta, and Eugénie
Were young queens once, were once young
 empresses,
With ears pierced for their jewels, and flower-
 shaped bonnets,
And parasols and billowing bright dresses.
They had young husbands once, with narrow
 waists
And brave moustaches. They drove satin horses
Through shaded parks, and with small smiles
 presided
At dinners of innumerable courses.

Proud, they were proud, these lovely princesses.
Victoria was determined as a stone,
Eugénie bore the blood of Montezuma,
Carlotta gambled for a windy throne.

One won, two lost, all three grew very old—
Old women who, before at last they died,
Had turned to legends, wearing on their fingers,
Like rings, the wars demanded by their pride.



EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

HECTOR KANE

IF Hector Kane at eighty-five
Was not the youngest man alive,
Appearance had anointed him
With undiminished youth.
To look at him was to believe
That as we ask we may receive,
Annoyed by no such evil whim
As death, or time, or truth,

Which is to doubt, if any of you,
Seeing him, had believed him true.
He was too young to be so old,
Too old to be so fair.
Beneath a snowy crown of curls,
His cheeks that might have been a girl's
Were certainly, if truth were told,
Too rose-like to be there.

But Hector was a child of earth,
And would have held of little worth
Reflection or misgiving cast
On his reality.
It was a melancholy crime,
No less, to torture life with time;
And whoso did was first and last
Creation's enemy.

He told us, one convivial night,
When younger men were not so bright

Or brisk as he, how he had spared
His heart a world of pain,
Merely by seeing always clear
What most it was he wanted here,
And having it when most he cared,
And having it again.

“You children of three-score or so,”
He said, “had best begin to know
If your infirmities that ache,
Your lethargies and fears,
And doubts, are mostly more or less
Like things a drunkard in distress
May count with horror, while you shake
For counting days and years.

“Nothing was ever true for me
Until I found it so,” said he,
“So time for me has always been
Four letters of a word.
Time? Is it anything to eat?
Or maybe it has legs and feet,
To go so as to be unseen;
Or maybe it’s a bird.

“Years? I have never seen such things.
Why let your fancy give them wings
To lift you from experience
And carry you astray?
If only you will not be old,
Your mine will give you more than gold
And for a cheerful diligence
Will keep the worm away.

"We die of what we eat and drink,
But more we die of what we think;
For which you see we still as young
At heart as heretofore.
So here's to what's awaiting us—
Cras ingens interabimus—"
A clutch of wonder gripped his tongue,
And Hector said no more.

Serene and inarticulate
He lay, for us to contemplate.
The mortal trick, we all agreed
Was never better turned;
Bequeathing us to time and care,
He told us yet that we were there
To make as much as we could read
Of all that he had learned.



THOMAS THORNELLY

THE LOVELESS SEA

THE deep that lieth under
Spake to the realms above—
“My works abound in wonder
But yours are crowned with love.

“Trust not that ancient story,
Love rose not from the sea,
In heaven she sits in glory,
O'er earth she wanders free,

“But through my wastes of water
Her footsteps never stray,
Though seas run red with slaughter,
She chides not them that slay.

“I nursed life's rude beginning,
On earth transformed they grow,
To count among their winnings
The love I ne'er may know.

“There, even the tigress mother
Will die, her young to save;
Heaven's birds love one another
Nought loves beneath the wave.”

CARL JOHN BOSTELMANN

A SONG TO CALIFORNIA

HEAR me!

I have had alkali on my boots;
O hear my song—
I who have had poppies on my eyes,
California

I have wandered
About your brown hills and your blue mountains,
Down into your ripe green valleys
And along your infinite roads!

Dias dorados!

Your golden days I have utilised
In my vagrant wandering, pursuing your music
As a child, meandering casually,
Pursues romance in a museum.

O thunder and stars!

I have lain through many a long night
By a waterhole, listening. I have heard
The rhythmic drums of marching cattle
In your hills under the moon.

I have stood hip-deep in your cotton,
And shoulder-high your alfalfa has grown
About me in the San Joaquin Valley.
I have harvested sugar prunes
In the Santa Clara orchards,
Stricken with their beauty
Even as Hercules must have been
When he plucked the Hesperian apples!

I have sewed sacks on a harvester when your grain
Was a flood of gold in the shutes.
On the roads with a shovel and pick,
On the canals with a sickle and pike,
On the ranches, I have sweated and strained
To become a part of you!

Gold-gold-gold! Everywhere gold!
El dorado!

On your rivers, at the weirs and the dams,
I have witnessed the salmon, leaping the ladders,
Daring the gauntlet of spears,
In water knee-deep, to win to the headquarters
To spawn. I have seen the water silver
With their pilgrimage, a pageant of glory!

I have run like the wind across your plain,
Chasing the tumbleweed, shouting whoops,
Wild with vigour, crazy with fever!
I have bathed in the surges that wash upon your
beaches.
I have drownd in the sun, under the blue sky,
On the white sand.

Your palms have spread their shade for me
Your redwoods, your pines, your spruce,
Your aspens, your eucalyptus, your cottonwoods!
You have flavoured the air I breathed, with them
And with the orange-blossoms, the cherry-
blossoms,
The prune-blossoms, the apple-blossoms,
Of your orchard gardens!
You knew me then, California!

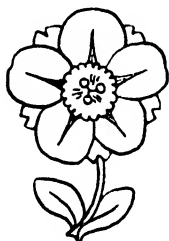
I have discovered your lakes,
Fragments of sky in the vales of your mountains,
Fringed with the margins of forests,
Sapphire blue at noon
As your heavens!

I have heard the rumble of fountains,
Plumed gushers of oil, speaking your might
With a roar like your rivers'
I have danced to a chorus of turbines
Humming a new music,
Chanting new songs of Sierra!

Mistress of the West,
You would sift more alkali on my old boots!
You would place fresh poppies on my eyes!
You would give me your brown hills and your
blue mountains,
Your ripe green valleys, and your infinite roads!

Dias dorados!

O dream of golden days!
No mortal can ask more than you have given,
California.
You have given me yourself, California!



DOROTHY MARGARET STUART

A REMEMBERED HOUSE

SOMETIMES a house will die as men will die;
And then the pulses of its being fail,
And cold upon the hearth its ashes lie.

Its windows slumber, veiled with blinds that seem
Like eyelids drooping over lifeless eyes
Wherein lies orb'd no dear recurrent gleam.

These things befell a house I loved of old,
But I was far away when they befell,
I did not see it darken and grow cold.

Between me and my memory of that place
I must be glad that there will never hang
The pitiful image of a lifeless face.

It was an old house, sober and sedate,
Aloof yet whimsical, austere yet warm;
It had a paved court and a creaking gate.

Some of the walls you could not see for books,
Calf-bound, a tawny bloom upon their leaves;
Its unpolled elms were clamorous with rooks.

There were three dim urns in the dining room,
Vaguely adorned with russet streaks and black
And dug long since from some Etruscan tomb.

Above them hung a parson's painted head,
With grave grey wig and seemly bands of lawn:
He had known Dr. Johnson, it was said.

His wife hung opposite, a resolute dame
More like Queen Charlotte than he might have
wished,
With cap too wide to go inside her frame.

He must have been an old philosopher
And a collector in a modest way;
His were the urns, and his the amethysts were;

The amethysts that beneath a glassy dome
Lay shrined uncut, unpolished, yet beautiful
Like frozen splinters of pale purple foam.

Climbing the shallow stairs you could rescan
The Hogarths, see the bad apprentice haled,
Before the good one grown an Alderman.

Now all these things are scattered and forlorn,
And in the echoing rooms that were their own
None who remembers them is left to mourn.

And there no more the long-drawn dusk of Spring
Deepening outside shall give new tongues of
light
To the brown logs fresh-stirred and flickering.

Yet, since I did not see their gold turn grey,
For me that house still stands, unchanged and
dear,
But in some nameless country far away.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

EROS

NOT all the gods are stern and grim,
The gods of Erebus and Dis,
But most am I afraid of him
Whose poisoned arrow is a kiss.

Jove with his lightnings awes me not,
Nor even Death with icy dart—
But ah! that little god, whose lips
Bring deathless anguish to the heart.



ELINOR WYLIE

PORTRAIT

"SHE gives herself;" a poetic thought;
She gives you comfort sturdy as a reed,
She gives you fifty things you might have bought,
And half a hundred that you'll never need;
She gives you friendship, but it's such a bother,
You'd fancy influenza from another.

She'd give the shirt from off her back, except that
She doesn't wear a shirt and most men do;
And often and most bitterly she's wept that
A starving tramp can't eat a silver shoe,
Or some poor beggar, slightly alcoholic,
Enjoy with Donne a metaphysical frolic.

She gives away her darling secret hope
At dinner tables between eight and nine,
And she would give Saint Peter's to the Pope,
And coals to men of Newcastle-on-Tyne,
She would arrange a match for Solomon
Or give Casanova an adoptive son.

She does not give advice; that I admit;
Here's her sole virtue, and I'll count it double,
Forgiving her some crime because of it,
But she gives tiresome and endless trouble,
If you need rest, she'll straight contrive a racket;
If gaiety, she'll fetch a padded jacket.

And she gives love of the least useful kind
At which advanced civilisation mocks;

Half, a platonic passion of the mind,
And half, a mad desire to mend the socks;
She's always wishing to turn back the page
And live with children in a golden age.

She gives a false impression that she's pretty
Because she has a soft deceptive skin
Saved from her childhood; yet it seems a pity
That she should be as vain of this as sin;
Her mind might bloom, she might reform the
world
In those lost hours while her hair is curled.

She gives a vague impression that she's lazy,
But when she writes she grows intense and
thorough;
Gone quietly and ecstatically crazy
Among the sea-blue hills of Peterboro',
She'll work within her cool, conventional flat
As self-sufficient as a Persian cat.

And she can live on aspirin and Scotch
Or British ginger beer and bread and butter,
And like them both, and neither very much;
And in her infancy she possessed a stutter
Which gives a strong impression that she's shy
When heard to-day, and this is verity.

But when she clothes herself in gold and silver
In the evening, she gives herself away;
Having remained a high laborious delver
For all the hours of a sunny day,
At night she gives you rather the idea
Of mad Ophelia tutored by Medea.

She gives you nothing worth consideration;
The effervescence of enthusiasm
Is trivial stuff; she'll give you adoration
If you belong to her peculiar schism;
As, that a certain English man of letters
Need never call the Trinity his betters.

Sometimes she gives her heart; sometimes instead
Her tongue's sharp side. Her will is quick to
soften.

She has no strength of purpose in her head
And she gives up entirely too often;
Her manners mingle in disastrous ways
"The Lower Depths" and the Court of Louis
Seize.

Doubtless, she gives her enemies the creeps
And all her friends a vast amount of worry;
She's given oblivion only when she sleeps;
She says she loves the grave; but she'd be sorry
To die, while it is a vanity to live;
"She gives herself"; what has she left to give?

She'd give her eyes—but both her eyes are blind—
And her right hand—but both her hands are weak—
To be "Careless to win, unskilled to find,
And quick—and quick—to lose what all men seek."
But whether this has truly been her story
She'll never know, this side of purgatory.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

IN MOUNT HOLLY

HERE beyond hope is all that death shall hold
of me,

This brown Arkansas hillside, dreaming through
depth of mid-winter, alone in the southland;

Under the dove-grey low-swung cloud come up
from the Gulf to scatter

Its benediction of deep rain, endlessly flashing and
pouring;

Here, in the drift of the years,

From the seas I have crossed, and the lands I have
known, and the struggles

I have faced with the steady river of time marching
on through my vitals,

I have come back to this point of repose, to these
stones side by side in the grass,

Turning as the earth turns against far Orion's fierce
whirlwind of stars.

They greet me unseeing, these graves;

Mute symbols of life accomplished, made noise-
lessly perfect,

Quieted by the cold hands of death that suddenly
seize on the body

In an hour unexpected, as a thief in the night,
running free with the tale of man's days;

Yet not to be loosed from the soil till the sphere
splits its core and is shattered

Like a ripe seed pod crammed full with thick seed
of expectancies, memories, and failures:

Their dumb thought trails on in the soil while I
in the high world above them

Lift up thin eager hands to the sky and cry to the
sun's dying splendor.

Here beyond hope is all that death shall take of me,
The blood that is mine, and yet theirs, the tower,
the base and the framework;
The building not reared by man's hands, but
shaped in the night and the silence,
The framework of the body fashioned as theirs,
for the blood through the generations
Repeats the same tale of Eden lost and Paradise
darkly forgotten:
When the stars hang low in the sky and two souls
become as one body
Straining past hope and despair to a timeless consummation,
Which is as the wedding-song of God mating the
stars without number.
Here does the last life wait,
Crouched in its stronghold of bone behind the
slow-vanishing sinew,
A spark without issue, a last ache of lust, a slow
tide merging and dying
Into the running of quick hidden sap and the thin
dumb flame of the grass.

Out of what chasms of fire,
Out of what lavalike torrents life sprung at the
outset neither I nor these graves can remember;
They have become turf-covered dumb mouths
opening below to the waters under the
earth,

Which burst forth but once in the flood, and since
then have ever been silent.

Into what dark seas we flow

I know not at all—I remember

Only the sunlight that lays a soft pencil of shadow
to sleep on the grass;

The tramp of the black-clad pallbearers, the words
spoken or sung, the lowering of the coffin
to earth.

Here beyond hope, beyond dreams,

Under this soft and lazy sky dreaming in depth of
mid-winter,

Where the sweetgum casts to the earth its brown
prickly balls, where the holly

Flashes its scarlet clusters, where the feathery pine
sways its thin needles,

Where the red haw blazes with berries threaded
bright on long outspraying stems,

Where the conelike fount of the magnolia spreads
downwards a billion of leathery-green leaves,

Where the acorn lies split on the stone, its yellow
sustenance wasted:

Here was I fashioned and made

By those who now sleep in the earth at my feet,
as they by others forgotten.

Their speech was my speech, their dream was my
dream, it was given

Beyond the cloud's arbitrament of rain to create,
or the slow earth's power to destroy.

And I pause ere I go,

And stretch out my hands to these worn stones,
smoothing them over and over,

Repeating their names which no one but I now
remembers,
Praying that they may somehow bless me;
These who have given me life and so many dreams
On this brown Arkansas hillside, quiet in depth of
midwinter:
Out of this army of graves facing eastward I single
out but these two stones,
I wailingly beseech them
With the tears of the spirit torn against life and its
days,
In this place where so many tears have been shed
and mortal lives brought to the awe
Of the open portals of death, beyond hope, beyond
dreams;
I kneel and weep as a man weeps,
I cry out aloud as a man cries,
'Let that which is mine and yet yours, this memory
transient, this passion,
Marked by the cross of Christ on those stones,
marked in my heart by time's ebbing,
Be with me now forever wherever I go.'



LEW SARETT

BROKEN DRAKE

THROUGH harrowing hours now, O broken
drake,
I've watched you, from my shelter in these reeds,
Struggling to lift your splendour from this lake
That holds you, crippled, in a net of weeds.

How desperately you circle round and round
Your patch of open water in the rice,
Seeking to break from chill white nights that
hound
You down with inexorable inching ice.

When rending hunger in your calls, what fright,
When, wedge on wedge, the homing ducks swing
low,
Gabbling their counsel to aid you in your plight,
To win you from the clutch of the grinding floe.

What flutter of shattered bone, what anguished cry
And frenzied frustrate lunge, O lonely thing,
When, wedge on wedge, they wheel and let you
lie—
To sink back, panting, on pour splintered wing.

Futile your hope; November night will crowd
Your flesh to sleep on a green and glassy bed,
Cover you gently with a snows shroud,
And chant for you in the rushes at your head.

SIEGFRIED SASOON

EVERYMAN

THE weariness of life that has no will
To climb the steepening hill;
The sickness of the soul for sleep and to be still.
And then once more the impassioned pigmy fist
Clenched cloudward and defiant;
The pride that would prevail, the doomed protagonist
Grappling the ghostly giant.
Victim and venturer turn by turn; and then
Set free to be again
Companion in repose with those who once were
men.



H. S. MACKINTOSH

BALLADE OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL POET

I SENT my tragic poem "The Vendetta"
To that unworthy rag—*The Butterfly*,
Together with a long and careful letter
Which proved that only Shelley could outvie
My "Rose-bud" sonnet and my lines—"Good-
bye!"

My twelve-page blank-verse "Epic of Stamboul". .
"The Editor regrets . . ." They made reply;
The Editor appears to be a fool.

My lyric "Pep," my business dirge "The Debtor"
I sent to *Boost* (Live Literature N.Y.),
My stirring work—The Rhymes of a "Go-Getter,"
My rattling piece of verse "The Cheerful Guy,"
I even sent them "Thoughts on Going Dry,"
I don't take so much trouble as a rule:—
They pleaded lack of space (a stupid lie);
The Editor appears to be a fool.

I said: "Perhaps the Moderns may be better,"
And on *The Scarlet Urge* I thought I'd try
My threnody called "Glumph," my arietta
Of three words forty times repeated: Aye!
And "Oedipus Unreeled"—(my brow is high):
But, though they matched the Ultra-Neo School,
No answer was vouchsafed—I can't think why.
The Editor appears to be a fool.

Envoy

Prince, on your undeserving monthly I
Do now confer this ballade. (Please keep cool.)
To you I'm sure these words will *not* apply:—
"The Editor appears to be a fool."(?)

MACKNIGHT BLACK

NEW YORK

SURELY no one dreamt this sky-going city,
And no one thought of it in beauty, before it was.

Certain men with their elbows on office tables
And men with their arms shaken by air-drills
And other men with their lime-cracked shoes on
the rungs of ladders,
Set this city in its place slowly.

And they dreamt,
Between pen-strokes and hods and rivets,
Of warm food for their mouths and women for
their arms
And soft places for shoulder and thigh
After the days of their labour.

It was well enough they had these visions
And no more;
That from their desires and the cunning of their
bodies
And the deep clay of Manhattan,
Skyward this city came, as a jonquil comes,
Unbruised with imaginings.

R. G. T. COVENTRY

SOLITUDE

THIS is a lonely place,
And old in dreams; the woods
Fold in their wide embrace
Unravished solitudes.

Here, while still evening falls
And the grey light grows less,
Peace builds the shadowy walls
Of ancient quietness.

Her hands uprear the gloom,
And evermore round me
The vast unshuttered room
Of night grows silently.

'She has such mighty guests
To furnish for and keep,
For here old Saturn rests,
And Time comes home to sleep.



CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

SHE TROUPES TO CONQUER

[*A Prologue for the Old Rialto Theatre, Hoboken,
New York, . . December 10, 1928.*]

LIGHTS, Henny!¹
And then Henny gives us lights
To illustrate our new Hoboken Nights.
Now for a moment, while there hangs between us
Our favorite Psyche at the Court of Venus²
A word before the ancient canvas rises.
What is it that our curtain symbolizes?
Suggestions have been made, conjectures vain,
Interpretations sacred and profane:—
The Muse of Movies, suppliant for her sins?
The Spirit seeking Where the Blue Begins?
Perhaps the Nymph of Cocktails we have here
Abashed before the Purity of Beer.
At least the blazon painted down below³
Is understandable and apropos—
Three hour glasses: three hours of relaxation—
The other emblem⁴ needs no explanation.
And see the little peephole, noting how
The cloth is stained by many a moistened brow
Where the Manager, the Drama's anxious
 spouse,
Peered and perspired and counted up the
House.

¹ Henry Kuntze, the electrician.

² The painting on the curtain.

³ Insignia of the Three Hours for Lunch Club.

⁴ A seidel of Beer, symbolising Hoboken.

The curtain brightens, and this well-loved place
Lifts by some magic into finer grace:
By rich tradition of the trouper's trade,
By memories of all who here have played,
By love and laughter, in her frolic age
She brews us the pure Lethe of the stage.
There is no moonlight sweeter than her spots,
Her footlights burn with something more than
watts—

For all who face that mystic line of fire
Rise for a moment past all mean desire:
Beyond that radiant nimbus in the air
There might be all the world, or no one there—
The greenest extra in the smallest bit
Knows he's immortally alone with it;
The most habitual ego, greedy elf,
Responds to something greater than himself—
This is the Highest Common Factor
And special honor of the actor.

Our Hudson Street, investigation yields,
Was once the site of the Elysian Fields
And still preserves, adventurers have found,
The humors of that famous picnic ground.
Here, free from Mazda Lane's monoxide scent,
Without New York's huge profit—and huge rent—
Here, on this last unspoiled Bohemian coast,
We staked our claim, ejaculating Pros'tl
But humble as we are, we have our pride:
Sometimes we hang the S. R. O. outside.
The merriest antics shown upon this scene
Could not be happier than we have been.
Consider, if our scheme surprises you,
That Shakespeare played Across the River too.

Time to ring up! I add, to close these rhymes,
That we were christened, by the New York *Times*,
“A merger of Thalia and Gambrinus.”
What rôle more pleasing could the gods assign us?
Whether you come from far away or near,
Whether you come for drama or for beer,
Remember, in apportioning your bounty,
The only legit. house in Hudson County—
Remember, in your evenings unbespoken,
The Old Rialto Theatre, Hoboken!



NORAH ROBINSON

A LAMENT

THEY gave me comedy: and decked my head
With tinsel and with spangles. All my lines
Were laughtermakers, so at least they said
(People will crowd round anything that shines).

But in my heart was searching agony
Because God showed in the eyes of a captive bird
And the secret of life was lost in the heart of a tree
And I, who knew all this could say no word.

Often above the stale and tawdry smells
I caught and lost a passing primrose breath,
A ghost of a wind that had stroked the first bluebells
And brought us blue though they were brown
with brittle death.

Sometimes I saw a face that might have known,
Sometimes the turn of a hand meant ecstasy
But the soul of the face was blotted with laughter,
blown
Away; and the hand was lost in applauding me.

Oh but some day will surely give this grim first
play an end
And draw a curtain of close turf above my raddled face;
I ask no second chance to play, I'd have the wind
for friend
And with the dust of daffodils be blown from
place to place,

Seeking the things our laughter hid, the truth our
smiles denied
The music drowned in merriment: the beauties
that abide.



DON GORDON

THE WAILING WALL

HARVESTS pass and turbans pass and scimitars
go by;
Jerusalem in its ancient way is wise;
It basks and keeps its wailing wall . . . and smiles.

These stones hold cool, immobile breasts
Where patriarchal hands still beat their knotted
grief
And women lean upon the weeping dusk.

All cities need low wailing walls apart;
Sun and stone and star respect the unshamed cry
And honey-laden hills stand druid for this rite.

Desolation under roofs is agony twice-borne,
Taut sorrow gasps like flame along the streets;
O cities, rear for us a forum made for pain!

Sharp grasses use the dust of Babylon,
But Jerusalem has wine;
O cities, make a place for weeping, carve a niche
for tears!



ORGILL MACKENZIE

THE CORMORANT

SEA-STRICKEN waste
Of bent and ling,
Whereover song-birds haste
And never sing.

I left my warm
Dream-laden room
For joyance of the storm
And the breakers' boom.

And only I
And a bird beside,
Though Dwarick cliffs are high
And dunes are wide,

We twain,
For joy besought,
Came, and the others, fain
But afraid, came not.

He a sea-raven
On a salt rock;
While other birds found haven,
He made mock

With the winds and me.
Tumult of mirth
From the green-lucent sea
Clawing the earth;

Bleak skirts of hail
From the tumbling skies,
Sweeping above the frail
White spume as it flies

Like hair from each
Great wave as it breaks;
Shells pestled on the beach
In crunching flakes,

Sucked back, and spewed
With sound of silk
Among the rocks, and strewed
As white as milk;

Thud of the blue
Boulders, the crash
Of tawny sea-weeds through
A heaving wash;

Rattle of sand
In the sparse bent;
And sky and sea and land
One element.

And I was glad
With the fierce and gay
Abandon of the mad
Dance of the day.

The cormorant stept
Astraddle a rock;
I laughed at the inept
Staggering walk.

The cormorant slid
Into the geo,
His demon darkness hid
In leaping snow;

Where waves no more
Rebuild and the floods
Fail, proud vavator
Of watery roods

He kinged it there
On hidden feet,
And sateless sought for fair
Or foul to eat.

The air sped fast
In gasping breaths,
The foam fled past
In broken wreaths,

The tempest yawned
In my face, replete
With merriment, and spawned
A dead thing at my feet.

It had no face:
It had clothes: no eyes,
But it glazed with ghaster gaze
Than cockatrice.

Sea-stricken waste
Of bent and ling,
Wherover song-birds haste
And never sing;

And only I
And that visitant
Untoward, and the mocking cry
Of the cormorant.



EMILY DICKINSON

"I RECKON WHEN I COUNT IT ALL"

I RECKON when I count it all,
First Poets—then the Sun—
Then Summer—then the—
Heaven of God—
And then the list is done.
But looking back—the first so seems
To comprehend the whole—
The others look a needless show.
So I write Poets—All.
This summer lasts a solid year,
They can afford a Sun
The East would deem
Extravagant,
And if the final Heaven
Be beautiful as they disclose
To those who trust in them,
It is too difficult a grace
To justify the Dream.

EDMUND BLUNDEN

AT SENLIS ONCE

(In 1916, during the Battle of the Somme).

HOW comely it was and how reviving
When with clay and with death no longer
striving

Down firm roads we came to houses
With women chattering and green grass thriving.

Now though rains in a cataract descended,
We could glow, with our tribulation ended—
Count not days; the present only
Was thought of, how could it ever be expended?

Clad so cleanly, this remnant of poor wretches
Picked up life like the hens in orchard ditches,
Gazed on the mill-sails, heard the church-bell,
Found an honest glass all manner of riches.

How they crowded the barn with lusty laughter,
Hailed the pierrots and shook each shadowy rafter,
Even could ridicule their own sufferings,
Sang as though nothing but joy came after!



R. E. HIERONYMUS

"INTERCONNECTION"

MEN, seated about a table, littered with charts,
See the power idea blossom into its youth.
They have created a giant, and, feeling his muscles,
They propose a stern test for this young Hercules.
"Now the time is ripe," the chairman rises to say,
"When the old boundaries must fall. Let us hitch up
This servant of ours in a tremendous harness;
Let us harness him to-day to half the nation."

Flash, O primordial power unleashed!
Shake off the sleep of a million years!
Strike, lightning enslaved, descend where we bid—
Scourge of the ancients, bow to our will!

A voice from Crookesville leaps over the mighty
wires,
Mingling with the Kilowats of the gods, and freed
again;
"Hello, Philo! Let me talk to McFarland, please—
This is Tommy Williams, speaking from Crookes-
ville.

Hello, McFarland, is Windsor all ready now?
Chicago is waiting to join the Ohio group."
Tommy Williams, the little man with the big
voice—
Tommy Williams, harnessing ten million horses.

Chicago, hold ready your million horsepower;
Boston, make ready your high pressure turbine.
Milwaukee, Waukegan, Twin Branch and Toledo,
Philo, down there on the sleepy Musgingum,

Wake you this day to the pulse of a nation,
Wake you this day to the work of the world!
Gird up your loins, Mussel Shoals and Atlanta,
Join in the circuit from Gulf to Great Lakes,
Join in the pool from the Lakes to the seaboard;
Hitch your wagon to a new constellation
In this year of our Lord nineteen hundred and
twenty-eight!

We're going to count on your guiding hand,
Windsor—
Goliath down there on the muddy Ohio!
We hear your synchronous drums, your poles
whirring,
Setting the mighty labor stroke for the others,
Setting a new pace for the work of the world.

Pittsburgh, come into this mighty transfusion—
Spare us a pint of your life-giving blood, will you,
To haul an electric train in from the suburbs?
Joliet, through in the master controller-switch,
Put your strong plainsman's shoulder to the wheel
To turn yet faster those New England spindles,
What's the matter with the new circuit, Kingsport?
Set your relays up if the switches won't stay in.
Do you want the long coal-trains to stall on the hills,
Or the loop elevators to stop half-way up the shaft?
Cleveland, awake from your slumber and lethargy,
Enter the life-giving ring—to far horizons
Energise your gleaming cables, join in the chain!

Hello, Richmond, the New England streams are
dwindling,

Must we tell those drab valley towns, where the
lathes are lagging,
That we haven't a crust for them? Give them a
hand—
What are a thousand kilowatts, anyway!
What are ten thousand kilowatts among ten
million!

Tie into it quickly, you turbines at Calumet!
They're christening your huge successors even now
At Schenectady and South Philadelphia;
And tomorrow's children stir harshly in the womb,
Taking form and substance in the shops at Fort
Wayne.

Phase in your last turbo-generator, Crawford—
What's the matter, are your transformers getting
hot?

Turn the fire-hose on them—shades of Edison,
Can't your apparatus carry an overload?

Do you want Roanoke to make bricks without
straw?

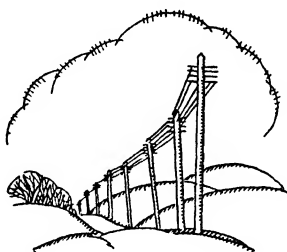
Pull your feet out of the mediæval ages—
Don't you know this is the blossom time of power?
Don't you know history when you see it made?

The last of the turbines settles under the yoke.
North has met South; westward the plain extends
Over the ancient hills, conquering old barriers.
Behold the thousand-mile triangle, filling
The strength of six million plunging steam horses,
And four million more from the lucid potent
waters!

Mark the hoofbeats of ten million horses,

Tirelessly toiling in a common harness,
Faithful to share a common load.
On loaded wires the roll-call of the states
Has left the gears of half the nation meshed
By a norn power, unseen, intangible.

*Flash, O primordial power unleashed!—
Shake off the sleep of a million years.
Strike, lightning enslaved, descend where we bid;
Scourge of the ancients, bow to our will!*



W. FORCE STEAD

HIS NYMPH GOES BOTANIZING

To Cicely Aged 15

"TOMORROW," said my Nymph, "I'll go
And botanize with you"; and so,
Tomorrow, in the curious way
That tomorrows have, became today;
And we have roamed about for hours,
Poking our noses into flowers.

Skirting the cedar of Lebanon,
The pond with lily-pads afloat,
The owl-inhabited barn, and on
By nut-grove and by pigeon-cote,
We rifled meadow, lane and hedge,
Down to the reed-grown water-edge.
So deep the marsh, we sought the stile,
Stood on a low stone bridge awhile;
A snipe shot up, away it went
And left a sense of wonderment;
We heard its loud, then distant drumming,
The bird had gone; the spring is coming.

But spring, as yet, just peeping out,
Not many flowers have got about.
Still, every time I saw you lean
Over a leaf with quickened sight,
Some blossom, hitherto unseen,
Stood up as in a ray of light:
Not buttercup, not aconite,
Not primrose and not celandine;
You, you, it was, that made them shine.

April's the time of coming things,
Of hopes and faithful promisings;
So, while the dog-rose only flings
A stem where even the leaves are shy,
It will have roses by and by.
Bramble is worse, for he's no better
Than thriftless tramp or hopeless debtor,
For look, how shabbily he goes
In weathered leaves, old worn-out clothes.
You smiled upon my hedgerow tramp,
Then pointed to a silver lamp,—
Stitchwort, or Star of Bethlehem,
Brightening the dead leaves, dull and damp:
Yet it was you that brightened them
More than the Star of Bethlehem.

Now in the stream the reeds are growing,
Sworded rushes their blades are showing;
With tiny flowers the water-cress
Scatters a wide faint starriness.
Half-hid in grass, yet twinkling through,
Ground-ivy winks its eyes of blue.
Here's shepherd's-purse on a farmyard wall,
Gold-moss and stone-crop, meek and small.
Then, at their feet, that woolly weed,
Groundsel with puff of fluffy seed.
Well-named, and sounding rather silly,
Here's the persistent sticky-billy.
Still, it is you, and only you,
Not windflower and not columbine,
That tells me spring begins to shine.

Old moody oak looks winter-grim,
Spite of brownleaf-buds on the limb,

Yet by his moss-embedded root
Wild strawberry blossoms promise fruit,
And wild geranium tall and slim
Bears a delicate maiden grace.
How prettily the cuckoo-flower
Woos diamonds from a wealthy shower!-
Pitching their tents in a woodland space,
These lords-and-ladies well may be
An exiled aristocracy;
Enquire their names, and we shall find
Orlando and his Rosalind.

Nymph, you would turn a cottage garden
Into the fairy glades of Arden!
When I am darkness through and through,
Magic casement!-I come to you,
And the world opens, fresh and new.

Mind is a kingdom; take the throne
And lead your flowery subjects on.
Heart is a temple; you the priest,
And flowers are guests at our love-feast.
Do some escape us?—Out, again,
My Nymph!—by highway, hedge and lane,
Those loitering wedding guests to find
For our great feast of heart and mind.



HELENE MULLINS

TWELVE GOOD MEN AND TRUE

LORD God in Heaven, attend;
We are here to judge a man.
Be Thou in this tragic hour his friend,
None on a jury can.

Thou in the light, we in the dark,
When the scales of justice tilt,
How shall we find the outward mark
Of innocence or guilt?

Lord God, we are gathered here
To analyse a crime.
What if we blunder through rage or fear,
Or lack of sufficient time?

How can we tell what label's best
To put to a prisoner's name?
How may we know in the selfsame test
We wouldn't have done the same?

Thou who art merciful and just,
We who are passion-swayed,
How shall we judge a man (since we must)
Like to our image made.

H. BONAR

FRONT-PAGE STUFF

CARRY this woman and her lover out together,
Swear at the crowd and tell them "Gangway
there, God damn you!"
Shove them quickly into the ambulance and let
the coroner
Tell the reporters, "Dead as hell—he drilled 'em
both."

Where will we bury these lovers? Will they lay
them,
Breast to breast and hungry mouth to mouth,
In the same grave as naked as they died?
Or will they ship him home to a far place to be
sorrowed over,
And will they find a dress she had, nice enough,
So that the shameless little blue veins in her delicate
Pointed breasts may be decently covered for burial?

What preacher will they get (with a white collar
Closed in front to symbolise the integrities)
Will he be perfectly at ease, and know
Just what he is going to say above these bodies?
Will he start out by saying, "Dearly beloved"—
And then go on to mention what the wages of
sin is?

And these lovers . . . one would judge
To look at the strange smiles on their faces
That they had scarcely noticed even that rattle
of the door, and the flare of the six-gun
splintering their bones,

That they are a little indifferent
To what the preacher says or avoids saying about
them,
That they remember only . . . perhaps . . . an
aching whisper in a stairway . . . a sweet
strange throbbing darkness . . . something
... perhaps ... that the bullets couldn't break.



HAROLD EDWIN BRADING

THE GAUNTLET

I WILL devise a doughty sampler
And your white fingers work its grace,
That we may trouble Time, the trampler
Of all the gardens of the days.

It shall be brave with red and russet,
Sea-blue and silver, and rare dyes.
Till whispering men and maids discuss it
With trembling lips and shining eyes.

In kingly colours we shall work it;
From Aries to Pisces, track
The flying splendour that's the circuit
Of the gold wheel of the zodiac.

We shall have January showing
A strange dawn, washed in wondering rose,
Where sudden spires stab starward, going
Up from a city no man knows.

Flooded fields next, that gleam and glister;
And windless banks new-tenanted
By the first snowdrop, our white sister,
With her shy, little, drooping head.

Thus February. Then, grey arrows
Shall portray March gusts whistling "Whew"
O'er brown lands hungry for the harrows;
And teams 'neath skies of wind-blown blue.

For April, broider blackthorn blossoms,
(Ask of "Our Lady of the Pearls");
With sheaves of bluebells 'gainst the bosoms
And quiet breasts of country girls.

May shall be set in flowered fashion,
Like some board where a great king sups:
Lilac . . . lilies . . . and the golden passion
Of a million enamelled buttercups.

June . . . roses edging dove-grey panels,
Where men in tawny meads do scar
With scythes great swathes like deep green
 channels,
Under a moon-green morning star.

Sun-bright lands for July . . . small apples
Lost on the deep-leaved orchard boughs;
. . . Blue pools that reflect the purple dapples
On the coats of honey-coloured cows.

August, depicting corn-lands marly,
In miniature . . . and all that sighed
Wind-wonder, where the bearded barley
Sways blue-grey ripples, acre-wide.

September, long lights on darkening stubble
And over a dusk of blue and bronze,
High shadows . . . wild wings . . . and the
 endless trouble
Like silver tremors, of flying swans.

October shall be one fire-flung onset
Where a cataract of kings ride down
On tall steeds through a wine-dark sunset
To a great green twilight, where they drown.

Your trial (but triumph) shall be November;
Etched black on grey, till by degrees
The shadows take shape: men shall remember
Winds . . . bare branches . . . and silences.

Not, for December, threads upraising . . .
Yule-log . . . gift-tree, in coloured thrums,
But on black skies one white star blazing
For sign a king, long awaited, comes.

* * * *

What could be greater? What be grander?
Old Time shall see it, and confess,
(Ere his moths rend it) . . . forced to candour,
The challenge of its loveliness.



SAMUEL HOFFENSTEIN

CLOUD

THE cloud assumes fantastic shapes
Of beasts and continents and capes;
Of island, mountain, monolith,
And hybrid fauna out of myth.
I've seen the knights of Arthur's court
Themselves among its towers disport;
The silver griffon charge the sun
And once, a gold Napoleon.

Alas, that her ambition leaps
The steed that walks, the man who creeps,
And girt for conquest of the sky,
Conspires with creatures born to die!
The turret thins; the dream is done;
A breeze dissolves Napoleon;
The griffon curls his pale remains
Round Arthur's court, while Arthur rains.

Myself have charged the hilly morn
A metaphoric unicorn;
Have hung upon my airy heart
A hybrid bard and Bonaparte;
Have stormed in fabled length and flight
The lunar headlands of delight,
And laid fantastic paws along
The foam-edge of the isles of song.

And yet there died upon the sky
A sun-struck vapor that was I,
And left no mark of myth or man

Or bard or quasi-Corsican.
Desirous cloud, we are too wan
For day or night to build upon,
And all our dream of happiness
Goes up in stream, comes down in less!



✓
MARTIN ARMSTRONG

THE MIRROR

INTO this crystal world, duskily gleaming,
You who come not again to the world of men
Surely here might come where all is seeming,
Nothing real. Where the old sad burden of matter
Is fallen away, and sound is lost for ever
And the sweet unrest of touch: where the known
forms shatter
To formless shards,—sheen of the moon on
meadows,
Rosy hues and the hueless bloom of shadows.
A cold, pure world by the fickle light awoken,
Gone when the light is quenched, gone when the
gazer
Turns away, gone when the glass is broken.

Rise in the gold-dust of reflected lamplight
And comb your rain-dark hair, turn and reveal
The pearl-white bloom of brow and breast and
shoulder,
Proud lips and grey eyes colder
Than the cold grey edge of steel.



LOLA RIDGE

THE UNARMED

MUSIC is in you like a rain
 of which one thinks
in a drought's pale agony, while a dream weaves
its taunting silver in the boughs above
and you think you hear, amid the strumming leaves,
dawn shaking herself like a wet white dove;

music is in you like a wine
 of which one drinks
as some drink poison till its ardent stain
has spread upon the blood
that not again shall send,
in several harmony through each allotted vein,
its comfort to the heart,
but in a riving flood—
that ever rages and must ever spend
in burning overflow the drops that start
to life the keening fires of the brain;

music is in you like a wind
that in beginning is no more than a breeze
troubling wild things behind bars
that see the far top of trees—
music, uncovering your scars
while you hover like a bird charmed
and gazing always one way.

D. H. LAWRENCE

WHEN I WENT TO THE CIRCUS—

WHEN I went to the circus that had pitched on
the waste lot
it was full of uneasy people
frightened of the bare earth and the temporary
canvas
and the smell of horses and other beasts
instead of merely the smell of man.

Monkeys rose rather grey and wizened
on curly plump piebald ponies
and the children uttered a little cry—
and the dogs jumped through hoops and turned
somersaults
and then the geese scuttled in in a little flock
and round the ring they went to the sound of a whip
then doubled, and back, with a funny up-flutter
of wings—
and the children suddenly shouted out.

Then came the hush again, like a hush of fear.

The tight-rope lady, pink and blonde and nude-
looking, with a few gold spangles
footed cautiously out on the rope, turned prettily,
spun round
bowed, and lifted her foot in her hand, smiled,
swung her parasol
to another balance, tripped round, poised and
slowly sank
her handsome thighs down, down, till she slept
her splendid body on the rope.

When she rose, tilting her parasol, and smiled at
the cautious people
they cheered, but nervously.

The trapeze man, slim and beautiful and like a fish
in the air
swung great curves through the upper space,
and came down like a star.

—And the people applauded, with hollow, fright-
ened applause.

The elephants, huge and gray, loomed their
curved bulk through the dusk and sat up,
taking strange postures, showing the pink
soles of their feet
and curling their precious live trunks like am-
monites

and moving always with slow soft precision
as when a great ship moves to anchor.

The people watched and wondered, and seemed
to resent the mystery that lies in beasts.

Horses, gay horses, swirling round and plaiting
in a long line, their heads laid over each other's
necks;

they were happy, they enjoyed it;
all the creatures seemed to enjoy the game
in the circus, with their circus people.

But the audience, compelled to wonder,
compelled to admire the bright rhythms of
moving bodies,
compelled to see the delicate skill of flickering
human bodies

flesh flamey and a little heroic, even in a tumbling
down,
they were not really happy.
There was no gushing response, as there is at the
film.

When modern people see the carnal body dauntless
and flickering gay
playing among the elements neatly beyond com-
petition
and displaying no personality,
modern people are depressed.

Modern people feel themselves at a disadvantage.
They know they have no bodies that could play
among the elements.
They have only their personalities, that are best
seen flat, on the film,
flat personalities in two dimensions, imponderable
and touchless.

And they grudge the circus people the swooping
gay weight of limbs
that flower in mere movement,
and they grudge them the immediate, physical
understanding they have with their circus
beasts,
and they grudge them their circus-life altogether.

Yet the strange, almost frightened shout of delight
that comes now and then from the children
shows that the children vaguely know how cheated
they are of their birthright
in the bright wild circus flesh.

ROBERT P. TRISTAN COFFIN

"AN AEROPLANE AGAINST A DAYLIT MOON"

AN aeroplane against a daylit moon
Drops threads of organ music through the
wind,

This is the one that crawled the ancient slime
And in the ancient ocean dumbly finned.

This is the thing a maker made to move
Like rings inside the column of a tree,
This is the thing he taught to built the slow
Cathedrals of the corals in the sea.

This is the creature told to breed and die
With eyes unseeing as the daisies' are,
To burn and be consumed into a dust
And know no more of burning than a star.

Blind sculptor of a marble that could turn
The sculptor and declare where he had spanned
The light and dark together to his car
The maker wrought far better than he planned!

For here was one could make the very knife
Of love denied his heart within his ribs
And learn of stones to sing, of bulls to bow,
And learn how hawks have mercy in their nibs.

Catchmoon and tides and change and call them white
Women of the changeless eyes and hair,
Build lovelier than ever crystal dreamed,
Outstrip the homing pigeons of the air.

Build towns and topple them again with words,
Clutch star and rose together in his hand,
Taste omnipotence and smiling go
To meet the day that stops the mouth with sand.

Learn to run who must creep towards the grave,
To fly who knows himself compact of earth,
And see in all the everlasting doom
Of things made beautiful a theme of mirth.

O younger god of whom the old is born!
O sailor of the thin tides of the air!
Tall Troy lies low behind you and before
Towns higher than the towers of your prayer.



RICHARD CHURCH

THE BUILDERS

THEY did not speak, but walked beside the lake
Watching the wild duck flying low to water
Touched by dropped wings to spray of molten
bronze

Against the autumn sunset. Veiled in smoke,
And netted in the rain of shrunken leaves,
Day died, and with it died the ghost of summer,
The wistful light, false warmth.

They did not speak,
These lovers who had brought the harvest in,
Watched through the autumn over deeds of spring,
And now were rich. They had no need for speech,
But took their way in thankfulness, their eyes
Half-veiled, drooping to keep the world away,
Guarding their joy and their increasing wonder
At this dark miracle of fruitfulness
Amid a universe of failing powers,
The ageing year, the old and tottering sun,
The memory of death, youth snatched away,
And beauty steadily bereaved by time.

Such was the world they trod, a world of ashes,
A ruined hemisphere, yet lifted up
In the calm strength and glory of this love,
Renewed in death because these mortal hearts
Had sworn a troth against their dying blood,
And now were strong to cradle life itself;
With their frail hands, and intuitive faith,
Building a deathless summer in their souls.

EDWIN MUIR

THE STATIONARY JOURNEY

HERE at my earthly station set,
The revolutions of the year
Bear me bound and only let
This astronomic world appear.

Yet if I could reverse my course
Through ever-deepening yesterday,
Retrace the path that brought me here,
Could I find a different way?

I would see eld's frosted hair
Burn black again, and passion rage
On to its source and die away
At last in childhood's tranquil age.

Charlemagne's death-palsied hand
Would move once more and never rest
Until, by deadlier weakness bound,
It strove against his mother's breast.

Saint Augustine gives back his soul
To stumble in the endless maze,
And after Jesus Venus stands
In the full centre of men's gaze,

While still from death to life to nought
Gods, dynasties and nations flit;
Yet for a while among the sand
Unchanged the changing Pharaohs sit.

Fast the horizons empty; now
Nothing's to see but wastes and rocks,
And on the thinning Asian plans
A few wild shepherds with their flocks.

* * * *

So back or forward, still we strike
Through Time and touch its dreaded goal.
Eternity's the fatal flaw
Through which run out world, life and soul.

And there in transmutation's blank
No mortal eye has ever read,
Or told what soul and shape are, there,
Blue wave, red rose and Plato's head.

For there eternal Being in
Solidity more pure than stone
Sleeps through the circle, pillar, arch,
Spiral, cone and pentagon.

To the mind's eternity I turn
With leaf, fruit, blossom on the spray,
See the dead world grow green within
Imagination's one long day.

There while outstretched upon the Tree
Christ looks across Jerusalem's towers,
Adam and Eve unfallen yet
Sleep side by side within their bowers.

Th... ..ile fast in the Roman snare
The Carthaginian thinks of home,
A child carefree in Carthage streets
Hannibal fights a little Rome;

David and Homer tune their harps,
Gaza is up, sprung from its wreck,
Samson stands free, Delilah's shears
Join his strong ringlets to his neck.

A dream! The astronomic years
Patrolled by stars and planets bring
Time led in chains from post to post
Of the conquering Zodiac ring.



EDGAR LEE MASTER

GETTYSBURG

AMID the hush of the distant hills which house
The sleeping meadows, oak-leaves loose and fall
Across the sunlight, and along the rhythmical
Wash of the air upon this shore of boughs.

Leaves drift around the bronzes; but over the
grass
Of the field where Pickett's men defied
The grape-shot, cannon, and who died,
The shadows of October's clouds repass.

No shouts arise from the vanished garrisons;
No sound is here of wounded man or steed;
Meade stares at Lee, and Lee at Meade
Across a mile of pasture, eyed in bronze,

Where flies the solitary crow. Beyond
The spires of Gettysburg the skies implore;
And near the cattle graze, and grackles soar
Where the air is tranced as by a wizard's wand,

Till now it is a suspended mood whose gleam
Is like an invisible crystal which enspheres
The souls it veils, who with Elysian ears
List the far voice of undiscovered dream.

This stillness is the indifference of the sky,
The tranquil Muses behind the mountains hid,
Who suffer the Fate's beginning, nor forbid,
Nor ask the battle, nor mourn the tragedy.

Still they are brooding in their fanes afar;
And now they stir the oak-leaves with their breath,
Saying there is no life, neither is death,
Nor victors, nor defeated, nor fame, nor war;

But only music at last out of the dreams of these
As the one reality which overtones the mime,
The landscape, nations, races, even time,
Quiring eternal Nature whose heart is peace.



HERBERT E. PALMER

THE OFFSPRING OF HEAVEN AND HELL: A DOUBLE ALLEGORY

THE Angel sent to Man crouched in the meads,
Hiding from trafficking towns and roadways'
ringing.

And she was strange arrayed in gipsy weeds,
Green fluttering rags, blue patches to them
clinging.

She'd taken human form, because worn creeds
Had banished God and sent Him sunwards
winging.

She, and not He; though He it has been written;
I have not erred; I am not falsehood-smitten.

She seemed a slut, though starry, not of strumpets.
Full oft she seems a slut to swells in chariots,
To men who drive swift horses, blow loud
trumpets,

And turn a pampered cheek to ermined Harriets.
This Bride of God was cooking, -baking crumpets,
Beans, hard potatoes, and elf nuts called
"scariets,"

When Satan saw her sitting near the fire;
And Satan's soul was shaken with desire.

Satan was shouting oaths and drinking whisky,
Or if not whisky it was elfin water;
In skins he was, all wild-beast clad, mad-frisky,
Cutting queer capers, gamesome as he caught her.
He would have kissed her mouth, but deemed it
risky,

She drawing back and questioning why he
sought her;
Then, pitiful, she offered a potato;
He looked so blistered, Hell had burnt him so.

She saw him through the flesh, that dark deceiver,
And God looked down, and would not interfere.
She did not know he was the spirit's reiver,
But murmured soothing words, and called him
"Dear."

And he, desiring not to vex or grieve her,
Ate the potato, bit a cake in fear,
Wondering if her Spouse would quit the skies
And turn each grain of food to torturing flies.

And so this bride of God, this fay of Heaven,
This moth of wonder, hoverer from far spheres
Was wooed of Satan seven days and nights seven,
Forgetting who she was, whence her compeers.
And Satan sullied her with Hell's dark leaven,
And kissed her amaranth mouth, and calmed her
fears;

And then he left her in the meadows wild
The day he knew that she was quick with child.

And as her time drew near she left the meads,
The dripping dingles and the woodland spaces,
And knocked at rich men's doors, and told her
needs,
Searched every heart, and scanned all human
faces.

"Oh! take me in," she whimpered, "My heart
bleeds
From childbirth terror; I'm in fettering traces."

But all men shook their heads, and closed the door
Coldly; or struck her pitiful face—and swore.

O! thus it is God's angels are maltreated,
The Holy Ghost in fetters deep despised,
Detested, spat on, very vilely cheated;
It is the gilded Form that's finely prized.
And so, not angry, but her hopes defeated,
When Man's dark soul she'd plummeted and
sized,
She left the friendless streets of town and village,
And sought a refuge far from human tillage.

Nine days she walked; then reached the salty
beaches;
She could no further without taking ship;
And that's the thing a starving sojourn teaches—
Disowned, seek port, and give harsh land the slip.
She saw a vessel in the harbour reaches,
Its canvas monsoon-filled, prow on the dip.
The sailors nodded, smiled, and let her enter;
None asked her name, her purpose, or who sent
her.

Eastwards away they sailed, a seven weeks' blunder
Through scampering seas and roaring hurri-
canes;
The skies ran thick with flame and crackling
thunder.
“Gods! Help!” they cried, “We'll flounder
'neath these rains.”
And all seemed lost, when they discerned—Strange
Wonder!—

A fair green island 'mid the oceans plain;
The circling waves shone soft as spagnum mosses,
And ended seemed their bitterest pains and losses.

And here they landed, and the woman left them,
She who had saved their bodies from the seas,
Steered timbers round the rocks that else had cleft
them,

Yet all unconscious of the half of these.
Though of her power she never clean bereft them,
But left her spiritual presence on the screees,
And on the glistening surf and saffron beaches,
And on the resinous planks and blue sea-reaches.

And she?—she wandered over hill and mountain,
Through dale and dingle, vale, and bilberry
coomb,
Past waterfall and tinkling rill and fountain,
Seeking a cell of rest, a sheltering room.
But none she found; deserted was the mountain,
Lonely the valley, all the glades breathed gloom;
She found no human soul upon that island.
Forlorn as ravening seas seemed all the dry land.

Then swift her time came on her, and she rested
Beside a miry bog beneath the moon.
The summer trees around shone emerald crested.
“Wild Land!” she cried, “My child shall bring
you boon.

My loins with terrible power have you invested;
Strange progeny your wastes shall people soon.
Come to me, Spirits of Earth, and Sky, and Water!
Know me, your noble Ferment, the Void's daughter!”

Two days and nights she travailed, lonely grieving;
But she was comforted by Earth and Sky.
The trailing clouds, their rainbows for her weaving,
Murmured sweet music as they drifted by.
The woodland fays, their crystal grottoes leaving,
Imbued the fragrant air with carol and cry.
And all the glade was loud with fairy ringing.
Bright flower-bells tinkled to the thrushes' singing.

And goblin-men came out with knives and brushes,
And slew the snakes and serpents in the ferns:
They fetched her berries from the bramble bushes,
And speckled trout and minnows from the
burns;
And many a pillow fine of pliant rushes,
And syrup-draughts in little snail-shell urns.
The wild hawk watched beside her with the wren;
No fierce beast crept upon her from dark den.

For her the cataract curbed its sullen clangour,
The lichened precipice gleamed mauve and gold,
The glooming tarn woke glittering from its lan-
guor,
The tossing mountains brightly round her rolled.
Till spake a troll, "More humour!" Half in anger
"Things are too dreamy; children must be bold."
And so the desert rang with goblin laughter
That shook from emerald field to tree-top rafter.

And, gazing over mountains light-enfolden,
Lifting her eyes unto the lonely sky,
She saw a bright cross rayed with sunshine golden,
And face of One who for her child should die.

For it was in the blurred and distant olden
Long, long ago, ere Roman power drew nigh.
And Christ leaned down, and cried, "Brave suffering
mother,
I'll be a comforting comrade to my brother."

And so, 'mid music, mirth and melancholy,
Gracious bestowal under night and morn,
This child of Hell, of Satan and sheer folly
Came through to life, and radiantly was born;
But that angel white, its mother, knew not folly,
Nor wrong, nor sin, nor dark unrighteous scorn;
Beneficent, innocent unto Earth she came,
Celestial Spirit, and bestowing flame.

And the west wind cried, "Whoo-oo! Tu-whoo!
Baramboo!
Which one will conquer? Satan? Or sweet
mother?
Will he be imp or angel? Or just two
Mixed up in fiery strife against each other?"
And lightning flashed, and clouds obscured the
blue.

*Pit, patter, pat! Rain, wind, and a dark smother!
When suddenly all the wood cried out, "Arise,
Trees, from your roots. Exult in her might; and arise!
In the days to come, when men are losing their eyes,
Ireland shall lift a flame to the darkened skies."*



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